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the circumstances, that Sir James Frazer occasionally succumbs to the temptation of giving us an interesting picture, even at the risk of creating an erroneous impression in the minds of readers who do not know how sharp his critical acumen is when he chooses to exercise it.

Taken as a whole, Sir James Frazer's latest work is to be put down as one of the most important contributions made in the field of Biblical studies. The work will prove a stimulus for further investigations, and it will retain its position for all times as the most comprehensive and most authoritative collection of material bearing on the folk-lore of the Old Testament. Supplements to the work will no doubt be made to it from time to time by others—we hope by Sir James himself—but the world will probably never produce another Frazer, able to cover the entire vast field, with the sure touch of the master throughout.

MORRIS JASTROW, JR.

BOOKS OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY

The Gothic History of Jordanes. In English Version with an Introduction and a Commentary by CHARLES CHRISTOPHER MIEROW, Ph.D. (Princeton: Princeton University Press; London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press. 1915. Pp. 188. \$1.75.)

THE work of which the present is an inexcusably belated review concerns the historical student because it offers an English version of an historical source not previously translated, except in the form of a thesis by the same writer presented for the doctorate at Princeton in 1908. The present work is a revision of that translation, omitting the Latin text, and fortified with an historical introduction and a commentary.

The work issues, therefore, from the classical rather than from the historical graduate seminary. In its present form, however, it appears to be addressed chiefly to the historical student. The introduction of fifty pages is devoted to matters bearing on the value of the text as an historical source: the qualifications of its author, the conditions under which he wrote, the sources which he may have used, together with a chronological table, and a genealogy of the Gothic kings of the Amal stem; while only two pages are given to the Latinity of the author. Similarly the forty-five pages of commentary contain chiefly identifications of the passages in the authorities cited by Jordanes and explanations of geographical allusions in terms of modern geography; it is burdened very little with textual or other strictly linguistic elucidations.

The volume belongs, therefore, to that still scanty and slowly increasing body of medieval historical sources rendered into English. This material is of very real and practical value for the historical profession, since it offers an opportunity to give a first-hand impression of the Middle Ages to historical and other students who are not primarily

interested in that period, and who are therefore not prepared to struggle through the pages of a Late Latin text. Such works are very few, and any addition to them is exceedingly welcome.

These works stand midway between the labored scholarship of editing a manuscript, on the one hand, and the text-book work of compiling a source-book for school use, on the other. They must be judged by this fact, and it is not disparaging to the present work to note that it takes its apparatus direct from Mommsen's great edition of Jordanes, in the *Monumenta*. The information in the introduction is most of it to be found in the elaborate study prefaced to Mommsen's text, and the citations in the commentary from authors referred to by Jordanes are most of them to be found in Mommsen's foot-notes to the text. Lest this should seem invidious, it must be said that Professor Mierow acknowledges his indebtedness, that it would be difficult gleaning any-way after Mommsen had passed over the ground, that the writer seems to have canvassed pretty thoroughly the periodical literature since Mommsen, for corrections, criticisms, and additions, and that the results of this labor appear in the introduction and commentary. Moreover, the commentary includes a great deal of information gathered from standard authorities on place-names, tribal names, and other obscurities of the text.

It may not be out of place to recall briefly the significance of Jordanes. This Romanized, Christianized Goth wrote a condensation of a history of the Goths by Cassiodorus; the total disappearance of the original work gave an unmerited value to the uncritical and badly written abbreviation. We have no sure means of knowing how much Jordanes contributed of his own knowledge or from his own researches, but the amount is generally agreed to be very little. Even allowing for the fact that his work represents Cassiodorus, it is of limited value as an historical source, for the history of the period for which it is an authority—say 400 to 550 A.D.—is much more accurately and fully preserved in other writers, such as Procopius. Jordanes is the sole authority for some things of importance, such as the battle of the Catalaunian Fields; and his account of the early history of the Goths may contain some genuine traditions. The chief interest is found, however, in its revelation of that curious cultural age transitional between classical and medieval, which we call patristic, and of that curious type, the man of barbarian race only two or three generations from tribal life and wearing the habits of Christian classical society. E. H. M.

A Short History of France, from Caesar's Invasion to the Battle of Waterloo. By MARY DUCLAUX (A. Mary F. Robinson). (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1918. Pp. ix, 345. \$2.50.)

ANY one who intends or aspires to write a short history of a large and complex subject might well take this book as his consummate model,